



AIRC NEWS

Newsletter from the American Information Resource Center (AIRC), Chennai
October-December, 2005

From the Publisher:

Greetings.

As you may know the United States is very often referred to as a "Nation of Volunteers." Very recently, Mr. Christopher M. Wurst, Deputy Public Affairs Officer, U.S. Consulate General, Chennai discussed volunteerism in the United States with students at the Madras School of Social Work, Chennai. We are including excerpts from his speech in this issue of our newsletter which I hope you will find interesting and useful. We have also included some resources on the subject.



AIRC staff has been reaching out to a varied number of educational institutions and individuals, providing information on AIRC resources and services for the benefit of patrons in south India. During July and September 2005 they visited several cities and also organized traveling exhibitions in Vijayawada and Mysore. I am including some great photos from these trips which I am sure you will enjoy seeing. We will be glad to organize similar events in your city. Do let us know.

I look forward to meeting you at the AIRC!

Ravi Candadai
Consul for Public Affairs

VOLUNTEERISM

*By Christopher M. Wurst, Deputy Public Affairs Officer,
United States Consulate General, Chennai*

Volunteerism can change the world. In fact, I will submit to you that without volunteerism the world cannot sufficiently change to meet the fundamental needs of its inhabitants.

Distinctions can be made between volunteerism and charity and public service. No one nation is inherently more generous than another. However, it is common to hear America referred to as a "Nation of Volunteers." What is it about volunteerism in the US,

that has become so culturally inculcated, and, I might add, so effective. After all, the 29 million service hours given in America last year added up to roughly \$226 million dollars, an amount greater than the GDP of 85% of the world's countries. As Pulitzer Prize-winning historian, Merle Curti says, "Emphasis on voluntary initiative has helped give America her national character."

America was, born of 'mutual dependence.' People came to a New World that had very little structure. During Colonial times, people helped each other simply to survive. Borne out of necessity, community service in America, by the beginning of the 19th century, had become intertwined with the system of participatory democracy that was at the heart of the great American experiment. The American ideal of individuality meshed perfectly with volunteerism.

As America expanded in the 19th century, voluntary organizations grew in strength and numbers. The country was full of orphanages, general hospitals, poorhouses, children's aid societies, the YMCA, sanitary commissions, vaccination drives, temperance movements, women's empowerment conventions, and the most galvanizing and arguably greatest volunteer movement in the nation's history: the anti-slavery movement—the abolitionists.

The period following the Civil War saw both the rise of great industry and, with the great industrialists, large-scale philanthropy. Charitable organizations, public libraries, scholarships and endowments became established forces

In the early part of the 20th century, Settlement Houses and other community organizations successfully fought to improve conditions for women, children, and immigrant workers. America's entrance into World War I further increased the enhancement of federated fundraising, to provide support for national and international services agencies.

President Franklin Roosevelt's New Deal program shifted responsibility for the relief of the poor from the voluntary sector to the federal government.

By World War II, the government took the lead in relief efforts for service men and women, even overseeing community development and civilian defense efforts. During this period, national health agencies, such as the

Dates to Remember

October 1-31	- National Book Month
October 10	- Columbus Day
October 24, 1945	- United Nations Day: 60th Anniversary
November 1-30	- National AIDS Awareness Month
November 11	- Veteran's Day
November 24	- Thanksgiving Day
December 1-31	- Universal Human Rights Month

American Heart Association, Tuberculosis Society and the American Cancer Society became large and successful fundraisers. By the end of the 1950's, social and charitable organizations were once again powerful. The Promote world peace and friendship. The 1960's saw an explosion of social and political volunteer efforts. By the 1970's, President Nixon created a government agency, ACTION, to coordinate the ever-increasing roster of government service projects. (President Clinton subsequently folded this into the Corporation for National and Community Service [CNCS].)

Volunteers give countless hours to US institutions, such as libraries, public schools, parks, veterans' hospitals, family counseling and/or child protective services, courts, jails, homeless shelters and centers for the aging. Volunteerism has become something of a badge that corporations wear proudly.

Some statistics: In 2004, roughly 65 million Americans volunteered their time to work for some type of charitable and/or service organization. Americans gave, on average, 52 hours a year—or more than a full workweek—towards volunteer activities. Nearly a half million college and university students are engaged in voluntary service activities. More than that, it's estimated that three out of four US citizens are regular contributors to charitable causes, and that donations exceed \$1000 per family each year. There are over 1 million charitable organizations in the United States.

More and more US schools are requiring their students to perform a minimum number of community service hours as part of their graduation requirements. The concept that so-called "service learning" helps to both extend learning beyond the classroom and helps students develop a sense of caring for others is catching on widely.

But, natural disasters and crises notwithstanding, why do people volunteer? They do it for self-esteem, to act in a socially desired way, because it is a part of their values, for self-protection, for the actual work, for career reasons, to better understand others, because it is their choice. These motivations have two elements in common throughout: The actions of the volunteers benefit both people in need and the volunteers themselves. And, at the end of the day, I would argue, the ends of volunteerism justify the motivations.

As one activist, finally, summarized: "Consider volunteering as an exchange." So, what is being exchanged? Everything. Volunteers inform, protest, assist, teach, heal, build, advocate, comfort, testify, support, solicit, donate, canvass, demonstrate, guide, feed, monitor, clothe, and buy things for other people who are in need.

AIRC Holidays

November 1 – Deepavali (Indian)
November 4 – Idu'l Fitr (Ramzan) (Indian)
November 11 – Veteran's Day (American)
November 24 – Thanksgiving Day (American)
December 25 – Christmas

formal introduction of the federal government as a catalyst for community service started a trend that, by the 1960's, transformed the whole notion of volunteerism. In 1961, President Kennedy established the Peace Corps to

In fact, volunteerism, like so many things, is limited only by people's perceptions about what it entails. To volunteer is, after all, an inherently individual action.

Resources on Volunteerism

Articles

ARE WE HELPING THEM SERVE OTHERS? STUDENT PERCEPTIONS OF CAMPUS ALTRUISM IN SUPPORT OF COMMUNITY SERVICE MOTIVES. By Joseph R. Ferrari, Maya J. Bristow Project Innovation (Alabama) Education, March 22, 2005 pp.404-407

THE ABCS OF CORPORATE VOLUNTEERISM ENDEAVORS

By Anya Martin. Atlanta Business Chronicle, September 17, 2004 pp. 6-9

THE ARLINGTON LADIES: AMERICAN VOLUNTEERISM AT ITS MOST MOVING

By Shawn Macomber. The American Spectator, May 2005. pp.12-16

FROM COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT TO POLITICAL ENGAGEMENT

By William J Ball. PS, Political Science & Politics; Apr 2005 pp. 287-291

TRACKING VOLUNTEER TRENDS: AS THE WORLD CHANGES, SO DO TRENDS IN VOLUNTEERISM. HERE'S HOW TO MAINTAIN A STRONG VOLUNTEER BASE; VALUED VOLUNTEERISM

By Susan J. Ellis. Association Management, January 1, 2005. pp. 72-74

VICTORIES OF VOLUNTEERISM; COMMUNITY NEEDS, MEMBER ENTHUSIASM, CONNECTIONS THAT CLICKED: ALL HELPED SHAPE SUMMIT AWARD-WINNING EFFORTS TO IMPROVE SOCIETY; VALUED VOLUNTEERISM

By Jesse Alter. Association Management, January 1, 2005 pp.75 –77

Websites

America's Promise: The Alliance for Youth Association for Volunteer Administration

<http://www.avaintl.org/>

Congregations in Community - McKnight Foundation

http://www.mcknight.org/cfc/initiatives_cic.asp

Corporation for National & Community Service

<http://www.cns.gov/>

Habitat for Humanity International

<http://www.habitat.org/>

InterAction: American Council for Voluntary International Action

<http://www.interaction.org/>

Internet Nonprofit Center

<http://www.nonprofits.org/>

National Center for Charitable Statistics

<http://nccs.urban.org/>

Peace Corps

<http://www.peacecorps.gov/>

United Nations Volunteers

<http://www.unv.org/>

USA Freedom Corps

<http://www.usafreedomcorps.gov/>

U.S. Agency for International Development

<http://www.usaid.gov/>

Volunteers of America

<http://www.voanet.org/>

Disclaimer: Internet sites listed in this listing, other than those of the U.S. government, should not be construed as an endorsement of the views contained therein

AMERICAN CORNER IN BANGALORE TURNS ONE

The American Corner at Baharatiya Vidya Bhavan, Bangalore turned one on September 30, 2005. The Corner is a window to life and culture in the U.S. and should be the first place to visit for accurate and up-to-date information about political, economic, cultural, educational and social trends in the United States. The collection comprises books, magazines, CD-ROMs, videotapes and DVDs and services access to materials, reference, photocopying and invitations to programs organized by the U.S. Consulate, Chennai.



The first anniversary programs included a lecture on Multiculturalism in the U.S. by Christopher Wurst, Vice Consul for Public Affairs, and a discussion on student visas, led by Vice Consul David Feldmann. This was followed by a lively quiz on America with Marshall University management students ("Name a U.S. state with a foreign country's name in it." Answer: Indiana) and a screening of the acclaimed documentary film on HIV/AIDS – *A Closer Walk*.

After a successful first year, the American Corner plans to conduct a series of programs for the second year –

lectures, book and article discussions, play and poetry readings, etc, strengthening and expanding the base of users. The American Corner and the American Information Resource Center, Chennai welcomes suggestions from institutions for programs at the Corner.

NEW AT AIRC

Books

Ackermann, Fran. **The Practice of Making Strategy: Step-By-Step Guide** / Fran Ackermann and Colin Eden. New Delhi, Response Books, 2005 (658.4012 ACK)

Bhagwati, Jagdish. **In Defense of Globalization** / Jagdish Bhagwati. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2004 (337 BHA)

Cross, Rob. **The Hidden Power of Social Networks: Understanding How Work Really Gets Done in Organizations** / Rob Cross and Andrew Parker. Boston, MA: Harvard Business School Press, 2004 (658 CRO)

Dietmeyer, Brian J. **Strategic Negotiation: A Breakthrough 4-Step Process for Effective Business Negotiation** / Brian J. Dietmeyer. Chicago, IL: Dearborn Trade Pub., 2004 (658.4052 DIE)

Hart, Gary. **The Fourth Power: A Grand Strategy for the United States in the Twenty-First Century** / Gary Hart. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2004 (327.73 HAR)

Holtz, Shel. **Corporate Conversations: A Guide to Crafting Effective and Appropriate Internal Communications** / Shel Holtz. New York, NY: AMACOM, 2004 (651.79 HOL)

Johnson, Larry. **Absolute Honesty: Building a Corporate Culture That Values Straight Talk and Rewards Integrity** / Larry Johnson and Bob Phillips. New York, NY: AMACOM, 2003 (174.4 JOH)

Meyer, David R. **The Roots of American Industrialization** / David R. Meyer. Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2003 (338.0973 MEY)

Pratt, Adam. **Adobe GoLive CS Tips and Tricks: The 200 Best** / Adam Pratt, Lynn Grillo. Berkeley, CA: Adobe Press, 2005 (006.7 PRA)

Selling Your Business: The Transition From Entrepreneur to Investor / edited by Louis P. Crosier. Hoboken, NJ.: Wiley, 2004 (658.164 SEL)

Smith, Gordon E. **Control and Security of E-commerce** / Gordon E. Smith. Hoboken, NJ.: Wiley, 2004 (658.84 SMI)

Articles

DIESELS VERSUS HYBRIDS: COMPARING THE ENVIRONMENTAL COSTS

By Corinna Kester. World Watch, July/August 2005, pp. 19-21

EMERGING INFECTIOUS DISEASES: A 10-YEAR PERSPECTIVE FROM THE NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF ALLERGY AND INFECTIOUS DISEASES

By Anthony S. Fauci, Nancy A. Touchette, and Gregory K. Folkers. Emerging Infectious Diseases, April 2005, pp. 519-525.

AN HIV VACCINE: AS WE BUILD IT, WILL THEY COME?

By Margaret M. McCluskey, et.al. Health Affairs, May/June 2005, pp. 643-651.

INDIA'S HIV/AIDS CRISIS: A MOMENT OF TRUTH

By Pramit Mitra. SAIS Review, Summer 2004, pp. 55-67.

MEDIA WE DESERVE

By Mark Blitz. Public Interest, Spring 2005, pp. 125-138, 176.

RICH AND THE REST: THE GROWING CONCENTRATION OF WEALTH

By Sam Pizzigati. Futurist, July/August 2005, pp. 38-44.

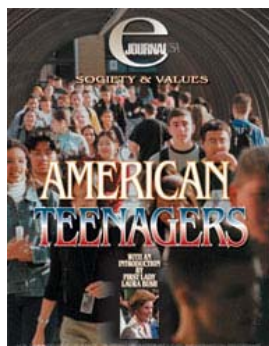
RUNNING IN PACKS TO DEVELOP KNOWLEDGE-INTENSIVE TECHNOLOGIES

By Andrew H. Van de Van. MIS Quarterly, June 2005, pp. 365-377.

CDROM

American History: A Multimedia Textbook

New Rochelle, NY: MultiEducator, 1998 (2CDs): From the Age of Exploration to the Elections of 1996, this two CD set chronicles the tales that are American History. The program's chronology is divided into 14 eras in American history each period has dramatic multimedia overview, as well as narrated and illustrated presentations on every important event in the period. There are also separate sections on the Presidents, First ladies, Election History, Statistics, African Americans, Native Americans, and Women's history.



This eJournal, divided into several thematic sections along with numerous photos, provides a wide variety of insights and perspectives into teenage life today in the United States. Includes special greetings from the First Lady Laura Bush.

<http://usinfo.state.gov/journals/itsv/0705/ijse/>

Electronic Journals

This eJournal USA brings together the information you need to make your trip to the United States as easy as possible. It also defines the acronyms of U.S. government travel programs and explains how these fit in with those of other nations.



<http://usinfo.state.gov/journals/itps/0905/ijpe/ijpe0905.htm>

AIRC organized Road Shows



Andhra Loyola College, Vijayawada



Maharani's College of Arts for Women, Mysore

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